AND THY HOUSE

Your Family Can Be Saved!

foreword by BENNY HINN

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P.O. Box 2305
Brentwood, TN 37024

First Printing, October 1981
Second Printing, December 1982
Third Printing, June 1983
Fourth Printing, February 1997

Printed in The United States of America

Reformatted for internet publications, June 2007
by William E. Saxon, Jr.

Contents

"And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. " Acts 16:31

FOREWORD

Your loved ones can be saved - every one of them!

It doesn't matter how resistant your loved ones may be to the message of the gospel, nor how long they have successfully evaded the convicting power of the Holy Spirit. God is a covenant-keeping God, and salvation is a covenant that extends beyond an individual believer to include the entire family.

AND THY HOUSE presents an inspirational and scriptual message of household salvation. Through examples like Noah, Abraham and Lot, Rahab, and others, this book illustrates God's covenant-keeping promises as declared in Deuteronomy 7:9 which says, "Therefore know that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments."

God is a covenant-keeping God! According to God's Word, your loved ones can and will be saved! The biblical truths contained in this book will show you how that can come about.

Benny Hinn

January, 1997

The Mind Blinder

No one would purposely drive over a cliff. He would only do this if he was not in his right mind, or if he was unable to see the impending danger. The Scriptures teach that the lost are held in both conditions. Would anyone in his right mind, clearly able to see eternal values, reject Jesus Christ and refuse eternal life?

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world [Satan] hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest [otherwise] the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" [2 Corinthians. 4:3-4].

If I ignorantly drove toward a cliff I would be in danger of needlessly ending my life. Many millions are nearing their death and approaching judgment oblivious of their need to repent of their sins [Hebrews 9:27]. Underneath a multitude of foolish excuses is a blinded reasoning. The mind blinder has done his work.

As believers we have authority, not over the will of the lost, but over Satan who blinds the minds of all unbelievers. We can bind "the mind blinder," permitting the glorious light of Jesus to shine upon the lost. The Word gives us special authority (as we will study) to intercede for blood relatives. Jesus gave us authority over "all the power of the enemy" (Luke 10:19). It is my intention to

show that believers can intercede for the salvation of their families with absolute confidence. The Word of God clearly teaches one way of getting our lost loved ones saved is through intercessory prayer. I am not saying that we have unequivocal authority over people's wills, but only over Satan - who has blinded their minds.

And Thy House

In Acts 16 we are told of Paul and Silas being unjustly imprisoned in Philippi. Rather than murmuring over their lot, the Scripture tells us they were singing songs of praise. The other prisoners were taking note of this unusual response, when suddenly they felt a strange rumble. An earthquake shook the prison foundations. None of the astonished inmates attempted to escape, even though their shackles fell like broken twine, and the locked door swung open!

When the Philippian jailer awakened he saw the opened prison doors and naturally thought there had been an escape. Knowing Roman law, he drew out his sword to kill himself. He did this to save his family from public disgrace. When a prisoner escaped, under Roman law, the officer in charge forfeited his life in exchange. His family would bear disgrace. No humiliation would come to his family however if he were killed in the line of duty by escaping prisoners. An escaped prisoner meant death for the jailer either way, so he evidently preferred to die at his post rather than before the Roman Council.

Because Paul was in a darkened inner cell, he could not have seen by the natural eye that the jailer was about to kill himself. God must have revealed to Paul that the jailer was preparing to commit a needless suicide. The jailer heard an urgent voice cry out in the darkness: "Do thyself no harm: for we are all here."

The jailer called for a light and fell before Paul and Silas asking, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Paul answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, AND THY HOUSE" (HOUSE meaning "family"). Luke tells us: "They spoke unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. The jailer took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them to his house, set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with ALL HIS HOUSE."

Salvation for a whole household has its setting in the Old Testament. In the book of Exodus, Chapter 12, the Passover night instruction was given by God. "I am going to bring you out of the land of Egypt by a great and mighty hand ... Every one of you shall take A LAMB FOR AN HOUSE" (v. 3).

Jesus is a lamb for a family. If one member partakes of Him all the family can, and that individual should believe the entire family WILL partake of Christ. Noah is such an example.

Noah

In Hebrews 11:7 we see that Noah prepared an ark by faith for the purpose of saving his family. Noah, listed in God's "Hall of Faith," believed God for the saving of his house. His obedience to God's instructions was the means of saving his wife, three sons and their three wives. Eight souls were saved by water (2 Peter 2:5). Noah believed God to the saving of his household; his whole family was saved. God did that for Noah and you can interpret it that He will do the same for you. If He did that for Noah, He would do no less for you.

While in prayer recently the phrase "Noah, the eighth person" was repeatedly impressed on my mind. I had read that verse before, but now I took time to study it.

"And spared not the old world, BUT SAVED NOAH THE EIGHTH PERSON, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly" (2 Peter 2:5). Yes, there was Noah, his wife, his sons (Shem, Ham and Japheth), and each of their wives. Noah was one; his wife would be two, the three sons would add up to five, and their wives would make eight. The Spirit prompted me that I was counting incorrectly: Japheth and his wife would not be numbers seven and eight; "Noah (was) the EIGHTH person." Then I came into a revelation. Since Noah was the head of his house, it is

only proper to assume that he would be FIRST and not last. Yet Peter said he was the LAST (eighth).

Note what Hebrews 11:7 records:

> "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear [1], prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."

For 120 years Noah built his ark. For all of those years his neighbors scoffed at him. During this time his sons were born, grew up and married. To his neighbors Noah was a very strange person - he preached there was going to come a day when water would actually fall out of the clouds of the sky. Such a preposterous thing! No one had heard of such! They didn't even have a name for it. Yet Noah kept saying it was going to "rain," and flood the earth. (Until that time the earth had not experienced rain. Genesis 2:6 tells us that a mist came up out of the earth and watered it every night).

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[1] Noah was not moved by fear that torments and dominates, which God tells us not to have (1 John 4:18), but was moved by the fear of the Lord that comforts and motivates (Acts 9:31).

Noah, disturbed by the evil of his generation, preached righteousness, hammered away at his ark and plastered pitch over the gopher wood. During this time his sons, no doubt, became the object of jokes, and when they married they probably heard on their honeymoon: "You know, Shem, you are really a sweet guy and your dad is a nice man, but all of this stuff about a flood coming, now really!" I can imagine one of the sons saying to his new bride, "Well, Daddy is pretty old, he is nearing 500 now." The ridicule continued 120 years, yet Noah continued his fruitless preaching (It should be noted that Noah didn't built the ark to save animals, as is commonly presented in Sunday school lessons. He built the ark to save his family. The animals were God's idea.)

God gave a sure *sign* to the world almost a thousand years before the flood. He always lets His prophets know what He is going to do. "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7). God revealed to Enoch, the first prophet (Jude 14), that this rain would come the same year his first son would die. Scripture implies this revelation so changed Enoch that he walked with God and pleased Him the next 300 years until his translation (Genesis 5:21-24). Enoch passed this revelation to succeeding generations and, as this *sign* from God, named his first son METHUSELAH, which means "it shall break forth." Sure enough, Methuselah died at the age of 969,

exactly 120 years after Noah began preaching and building his ark! The same year the flood came.

Noah was a righteous man and found grace in the sight of the Lord. In God's arithmetic Noah, the first in his family, now became the eighth. So if the eighth was accounted righteous, the seven before him were automatically accepted. When they went into the huge ark, Noah's wife, his sons and their wives went in first. He went in last as "the eighth person" and God shut the door.

Just as Noah prepared the ark for the saving of his family, and his righteousness was credited to their account, you too can do that in your daily walk with God. You can prepare an ark, and that refuge is Jesus Christ. You can enter into God's presence claiming, "I want all my family saved before judgment falls." God will start counting you as the sixth or the fourth, or however many there are in your family. If you are the first and you have found favor with God, He will count you as the last. Your whole family can be brought in.

Abraham and Lot

Abraham is often referred to by present-day Bible teachers as "the father of faith." He is our example in faith. Turn to Genesis, Chapter 18, for an illustration of this man's grasp of God's intent.

The Lord had come in the form of a man with two other "men" to visit with Abraham. Abraham prepared him a meal. After they ate, the men rose to leave, and the Lord said (regarding Sodom and Gomorrah), "I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know." That is, "I'm going to go down and see if it is really as bad as I hear, and if it isn't I'll know." Of course, God already knows the condition of Sodom, but He speaks to Abraham in a way he could understand.

Our longsuffering God wanted someone to plead the case of Sodom. He wanted someone who would stand in the gap. When God implies He will judge Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham responds, "Will you destroy the righteous with the wicked?" (v. 23). Abraham is thinking about his nephew Lot and his family who were living in Sodom.

Abraham had believed and followed God, who said to him, "I will give you all this land." In time, Abraham said, "Lot, our flocks have

grown and there is strife among our herdsmen, you choose what part of the land you want and I'll take the other."

Lot looked down from the and high country and replied, "I'll take the green valley, thank you." His decision reveals his centeredness on earthly things. At first he was content to live in the remote areas of the plain, but because commerce and trade were better in Sodom, he inched closer to the heathen city until he compromised whatever remaining convictions and moved into the city. There he could get a better price for his cattle, and was close to the market.

Sodom was a notoriously wicked city; violence and sexual perversion were rampant. The old English word "sodomy" comes from Sodom. That the term was well earned is seen where some men of the town attempted to rape Lot's angelic guests who appeared as men.

Sodom and Gomorrah were huge cities where tens of thousands probably lived. God promised Abraham if He could find only fifty righteous people He would not destroy the city. Abraham continued interceding until God agreed to spare the city for ten righteous persons, but God did not find even ten that were righteous, so judgment had to come. Perhaps, after Abraham heard this he asked, "If You find that there are not even ten righteous, would You at least deliver my nephew?"

The Bible declares, "It came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that GOD REMEMBERED ABRAHAM, and SENT LOT OUT of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in which Lot dwelt" (19:29). In Genesis, Chapter 18, we are told the angels went to Lot's house and drew Lot out physically, along with his wife and daughters. (Lot's daughters had not yet consummated their marriages and the espoused sons-in-law refused to leave.)

God hears Abraham and sends Lot out of the city, not because of Lot's standing with God, not because of what Lot had done, but because of Abraham's favor with God. God SENT LOT OUT BECAUSE HE REMEMBERED ABRAHAM. Due to his consecration and faith Abraham was in a place of preferred position with God. God delivered Lot because Abraham prayed for him. God brought Lot out of Sodom before destruction came as a favor to His friend, Abraham (Genesis 19:29).

It is important to note that it was Abraham's place with God that effected Lot's deliverance. When God destroyed the cities of the plain, God remembered Abraham. Abraham wasn't on the plain so why should he be remembered? God remembered Abraham for another person's sake: Lot's. God didn't remember Lot, as such, He remembered Abraham. God delivered Abraham's wayward nephew because He remembered Abraham.

"And Abraham got up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the Lord," the Scripture tells us (Genesis 19:27), so we know Abraham prayed much and thanked God that He was sparing Lot from destruction. Abraham had asked God to spare the city if there were ten righteous. Here was Lot, his wife, and his two daughters - that is four persons. During all the years Lot lived in Sodom he didn't even get six other persons to accept Yahweh. Lot was a sorry example, yet, God sent Lot out BECAUSE HE REMEMBERED ABRAHAM.

By comparison, you may have a nephew out in the world, but God remembers you, and He will send that nephew out before destruction comes because of your standing and intercession with God.

The Bible states the believer is "Abraham's seed" (Galatians 3:29). It follows, then, that your wayward relatives are your "Lots." Sodom is a type of the world, and you may have quite a few "Lots" in the world. You may have nephews, nieces, sons and daughters in the world, but be of good cheer, God is going to bring them out before He brings destruction upon the world. You must make up the hedge for them.

"Well," you say, "I don't feel as godly as Abraham."

We think of Abraham as a giant in faith, but he was not very tall in his early days. Romans 4:20 (alternate rendering) tells us "he grew strong in faith." Actually, he started out rather weak.

It is good for us to remember that God delights in delivering people, if others will ask for them. In the Book of Ezekiel is given a picture of God seeking just one person to intercede for a whole nation!

I Sought For a Man

In Ezekiel, Chapter 22, God is giving the reasons why He had to bring judgment on Israel. This was during the time of the Babylonian captivity. Ezekiel was living by the River Chebar, hundreds of miles from Israel, and God explains why the judgment had to come. In verses 23-29 God tells of all the oppression, the robbery, the tormenting of the poor and the needy, the oppressing of the stranger, the lies, the witchcraft, the vanity, the destroying of souls, and the profaning of Sabbaths that Israel had done all those many years before the exile occurred. "The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy: yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully" (vs. 29). This was a condition ripe for judgment.

However, the next two verses are quite amazing: "And I sought for a man among them" [one man among the whole nation!] "that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land," ["the land" is a title used for Israel] "that I should not destroy it: But I found none."

God was looking for one man in Israel who could take the place of the nation before Him … one man who could stand in front of Him for the land "that I should not destroy it." God said He did not want to destroy it. Had He found a man who would stand before Him in the gap and make up the hedge Jewish history would have been

different, but He gives this lamenting cry: "I found none. Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath: their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord God" (22:31).

The same is true for our families. Your family may be corrupt, wicked, and living for the devil. But you can be standing in the gap for them and God won't pour out His wrath upon them...... He delights in mercy" (Micah 7:18). He will give mercy to your loved ones as you stand in the gap for them.

In the Book of Joshua we see an example of one who did not have any practical righteousness, but through the hearing of the Word of God she gained faith, and that faith was credited to her for righteousness.

Rahab

Only two women in God's "Hall of Faith" are listed in Hebrews 11. One, of course, is the honored matriarch Sarah, and the other, by stark contrast, is a prostitute! She is even remembered as "the harlot Rahab" (Hebrews 11:31). Let's study her story.

"And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly saying, Go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and came into an harlot's house, named Rahab, and lodged there" (Joshua 2:1). God had told Israel to pass over Jordan and to take the city of Jericho. It was the first city in the promised land that they were to possess. Jericho was legally theirs by divine right, but they now had to go forward and conquer it.

Jericho was a big walled city. Archeologists have discovered this ancient city and said the walls were eighteen feet thick, and possibly inhabited by as many as 80,000 persons.

The only place the two spies could find lodging was in a heathen harlot's house. She was engaged in a sinful occupation, but was probably well-respected in her heathen city. She was not an Israelite or a child of promise.

Rahab had heard what great things Yahweh had done for Israel, and knew that the spies were men of God for she said, "We have

heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites … Sihon and Og … and as soon as we heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in the earth beneath" (Joshua 2:10, 11). As today, news of miracles travels fast.

She asked them for favor to be given to her in remembrance of the kindness she showed them in hiding them from the king's soldiers, who had heard that spies had been sent to their city. Noteworthy is Rahab's specific request: "Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the Lord, since I have showed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token" (v. 12). She wanted a sign or an evidence that she would be delivered and that Israel would save alive "my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, AND ALL THAT THEY HAVE, and deliver our lives from death."

The men promised that they would spare her (v. 14). Then she let them down the wall through her window. She told the men to get up to the mountains. They said to her, "Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by: and thou shalt bring thy father,

and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household home unto thee" (v. 18).

Rahab replied, "According unto your words, so be it" (v. 21). As the spies departed, she bound the scarlet line in the window.

In the Book of Joshua, Chapter 6, the Israelites were compassing the city of Jericho once every day. Joshua was told to walk about the city once a day for six days, and for the men not to utter one word as they walked about the wall until they heard the blowing of the trumpet on the seventh day (6:10).

If you were walking around a huge, thick wall like that you might say, "My, look at this massive wall!" "Isn't that a tremendous wall?" "We never saw a wall like that in the wilderness." "Look at that thick, strong wall." "We don't have any battering rams big enough, or stone-throwers to knock down a wall like that."

Had the men heard these reports, after six days of it they would have been so discouraged they would have headed back for the wilderness. A lesson to draw from this is if you can't speak positively when faced with a "wall", it is better to say nothing.

Joshua said, "And when you do open your mouth on the seventh day, don't say anything, just shout because the Lord has given us the victory" (paraphrased).

In ancient days shouting was the last thing the warriors did when they had conquered a stronghold. This was their cry of victory that they had indeed won. However, it was the first thing Israel was told to do on the seventh day. In the face of those walls they were to shout, because by faith they had already conquered (Joshua 6:2).

Many times had I heard and read this story of Rahab and her deliverance from death and mistakenly thought it was only a human agreement: she had made an agreement with the spies who were men of integrity, and Joshua had told his men to destroy everything but to spare Rahab (6:22, 23). She had shown them a kindness, and they in turn showed her a kindness - as they were plundering the city and destroying all the people, young and old, and even all the animals.

Joshua's word to the army was: "When you go in, destroy every woman, man, boy, girl" - God wanted to purge the city of all its idolatry - "slay everything that lives, except when you look up and see the red rope hanging out the window on the wall - don't slay anyone in that house. Keep them alive" (paraphrased from Joshua 6:17).

It came to pass when the people heard the sound of the trumpet which the priests blew, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down - flat. I had always thought that the entire wall around Jericho fell. However, in Joshua 2:15 the Bible plainly says Rahab dwelt "IN A HOUSE UPON THE TOWN WALL!" When she let the spies out by the window, they were then outside the city wall! I now understand her deliverance was not just a result of a human agreement, but she had faith toward the God of Israel. Just as Jesus said concerning the Roman Centurion: "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel" (Matthew 8:10). So we see in the Old Testament that God finds more faith in a heathen harlot in an idolatrous city than was found many times in His own covenant people.

Rahab must have known the Hebrew army had no weapons capable of battering down the wall. She knew they could invade her city only if their God, who parted the Red Sea, intervened for them. During the week of Israel's march she surely prayed, "O Lord God of Israel, I thank You and ask that when You knock down this wall, my part of the wall will be spared." She came to a conviction in her heart that her request was granted.

Her deliverance wasn't just a human agreement she had made with men, but a pact she made with God. When she hung that red rope

out it was a symbol of the blood of Christ. She was having faith in that red rope. Not only is Israel going to see this red rope, and not come in the house and kill me, but You, Lord God, are looking at my faith as I hang this true token outside my window, and when Your power hits this city, the wall where my house is will still be standing. Sure enough, "the wall fell down flat," but later Joshua said, "Go into the harlot's house." Thus we reason according to Chapter 6:22 that this was the only part of the wall that did not fall down. It was a divine deliverance!

The power of God came upon that wall as the people shouted with a shout. It wasn't the power of the vocal shouting, it was the power of God in response to their cry of faith that brought down the massive walls. It was faith on the part of Israel that knocked down the wall, and it was faith on the part of Rahab that her part of the wall would stand unharmed. Hebrews 11:30 teaches that Israel believed for the walls of Jericho to fall down. Verse 31 indicates that Rahab believed for her part of the wall to stay up!

Joshua looked up at the small portion of the still-standing wall and said, "There's the house, go up and bring out everything that is in there and save it alive." It was a divine deliverance and portrayed such strong faith in God that the Holy Spirit found it noteworthy to record it. This harlot is mentioned right along with Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joseph and Samuel!

Not only was she saved, but in Joshua 6:23 we read: "and all her kindred perished not." It was a contract between a heathen harlot and the God of Israel, and He honored her faith.

You may say, "I am not perfect righteousness." As a believer, however, you have the righteousness of God in Christ. Even as God honored Rahab's faith, so He will honor your faith, and you can believe God to the saving of all your kindred, your father, your mother, your brothers and sisters and all that they have. God will do it for you; dare to believe He will save your whole house.

To show the far-reaching effect of Rahab's faith, let's look at the rest of her story.

The first recognition given Rahab was that of faith, but there is a second. She is spoken of as "the harlot Rahab," and usually when she is referred to, her occupation is mentioned. God is showing us it is not by our works, but by His grace, through faith, that we come to Him. Rahab changed her occupation when she moved to Israel. Before that she was living like the people in the heathen lands.

It was nothing unusual to be a harlot. This was an honorable profession among the heathen. It was not socially degrading for they had no morals and were idolatrous.

Even in their temples they had prostitutes; it was considered a thing of praise to their idols. But when the fear and faith of God came into her, and she was redeemed according to the law, she began to live a godly, holy life. Her faith did change her character later, but the Holy Spirit reminds us that when her faith began she was still "the HARLOT Rahab." Later she was ceremonially redeemed and became part of the old covenant. Someone redeemed her (in accordance to the Hebrew law of God that a stranger could be joined to the Lord) and she was married to a man named Salmon.

In the Matthew genealogy we read" "And Salmon begat Booz [Boaz] of Rachab" (1:5). The new translations translate Rachab as Rahab. When this heathen harlot got into the land of Israel, she gained such favor that God allowed her to marry a particular man who was in the lineage of David, who was in the lineage of Jesus Christ. What an honor! What a different title from "The harlot Rahab." (Two heathen ladies made it into the genealogy of Christ" Rahab and Ruth. They both did it by their faith, devotion and obedience to the God of Israel.)

In the Book of Ruth we read of the genealogy from another point of view. "Now these are the generations of Pharez? Pharez begat Hezron, and Hezron begat Ram, and Ram begat Amminadab, and Amminadab begat Nahshon, and Nahshon begat Salmon" [it is inferred in Matthew 1:5 that Salmon married Rahab], "and Salmon begat Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed, and Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David" [Boaz redeemed Ruth and married her and begat Obed, who was David's grandfather]. And we could keep on with the rest of the genealogy and end with "and David begat Jesus Christ." Jesus was called "The Son of David." He is called the "lion of the tribe of Judah." He is called "the root and offspring of David." Isn't it beautiful how this woman by her faith became one of the ancestors of Jesus Christ?

It is a good thing to believe God to the saving of all that you have. God honors such faith; He honored Rahab twice in the inspired writing of the New Testament!

Protection for Intercessors

In Ezekiel 22:30, 31 God is speaking at a time when He poured out His indignation and His fury upon Judah, " ... but before I did, I sought for a man that could stand in the gap, and make up the hedge before me for the land that I should not destroy it, but I found none. THEREFORE, have I poured out my fury and my indignation upon them."

When judgment falls on your relatives it may be because you did not intercede as God wanted you to. God does not delight in the death of the wicked (Ezekiel 33:11). If you will stand in the gap and make up the hedge before Him He may withhold His judgment.

In Ezekiel, Chapter 9, God said that every intercessor would be marked by the angel with a divine mark of protection. An intercessor is one who pleads the case of another, and if you are one who stands in the gap in behalf of your lost husband, lost wife, or lost children, God has promised that His angel has a special mark of protection on you.

God is looking for intercessors.

In the Book of Job, Chapter 22, we are given an example of how God can use intercessors.

The Spirit of God is speaking through Eliphaz (not all of what job's three friends said was wrong), and is stating a CONDITION that must be met before God can use a person to bring deliverance for another person. "If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles" (v. 23). We are to live a holy life - "put away iniquity from your tabernacle."

When we meet the condition God gives many benefits.
From verse 24 to the end of the chapter we see the PROVISION.
The following are benefits received:

- receive gold and silver (vv. 24-25)
- have access to God with favor (v. 26)
- answered prayer (v. 27)
- make a confession and see it established unto you (v. 28)
- light shining upon your ways (v. 28)
- encouraging the downcast (v. 29)
- LIFTING UP THOSE WHO ARE FALLEN (v. 29)

In the King James Version verse 30 reads: "He shall deliver the island of the innocent: and it is delivered by the pureness of thy hands." The Amplified Bible reads: "He will even deliver the one [for whom you intercede] who is not innocent: yes, he will be delivered through the cleanness of your hands." Of course, it is by the goodness of God, but it will come about through YOUR experience with God. Was this not the case of Abraham and Lot?

Lot wasn't innocent, yet God delivered Lot through the CLEANNESS OF ABRAHAM'S HANDS.

Through faith in the shed blood of Jesus, we believe God will deliver the one for whom you intercede who is NOT innocent.

To intercede does not literally mean to offer petitions for someone else, although it involves this. It means to GO IN THE BEHALF OF ANOTHER, TO TAKE THE PLACE OF ANOTHER. Abraham took Lot's place. Everything that Lot received was through the cleanness of Abraham's hands. We are to stand in behalf of the lost. We stand before God and make up the hedge. Their hedge is broken but we are to make it up. To us is given the imputed righteousness through the shed blood of the Lamb. By faith you cover them with the efficacious blood of Christ.

It Is Well

The Shunammite woman in the Old Testament is an example of an intercessor who dared to believe for life in the very presence of death.

Elisha was a man on the go, and as he passed by the home of the Shunammite woman, she noticed him and asked her husband to build a room for the prophet so he would have a private chamber available. Here the prophet would rest from his journey, along with his servant, Gehazi (2 Kings 4.)

One day the prophet had his servant call the Shunammite woman. As she stood before him, Gehazi reminded Elisha that she was childless. "You will have a son," said the prophet. The next year she had her little boy.

Thirteen years went by, and she enjoyed her reward (4: 17, 18). One day he was out in the field with his daddy. "My head, my head," he cried, and fell to the earth.

His mother picked him up and carried him to the house. But rather than putting him in his own room she laid him on the prophet's bed. Then she fled to the mountain where Elisha stayed. He saw her coming and said, "Gehazi, the Shunammite woman is coming and she is very troubled. The Lord has hidden it from me, and I

don't know what it is. Go to her and ask if it is well with her husband and her child."

Gehazi asked, "Is it well ... with the child?"

"It is well," came her strange answer (v. 26).

A bit later when she came before Elisha she acknowledged the boy was dead, but before others she said, "All is well." She spoke this in faith.

You too can confess "all is well" for every member of your family. As Christians we generally say, "Yes, my husband is fine, BUT my boy has gone off into drugs, is in the night clubs; pray for him. He is getting worse and worse. He is straying more and more away from the Lord. I'm afraid he'll die unsaved." When what we should speak in faith is, "It is well. He is alive and well!"

You recall the ending of the Shunammite's story: the boy was raised from the dead through the power of God in the life of Elisha. God's Word promises YOU:

- "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children" (Isaiah 54:13).
- "The promise is unto you, and to your children ... " (Acts 2:39).

You can even claim your grandchildren:

- "The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee" (Psalm 102:28).

Has rebellion and ungodliness in your children brought you heartache?

"Thus saith the Lord: Refrain thy voice from weeping and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy ... thy children shall come again to their own border" (Jeremiah 31:16, 17).

As intercessors we need to understand more of our priestly functions. When Jesus ratified the new covenant, He sprinkled His blood on the mercy seat in the heavenly Holy of Holies and obtained an eternal redemption for us (Hebrews 9:12). He has made us KINGS AND PRIESTS (Revelation 1:5, 6).

Kings and Priests

We are prone to think of Jesus as being only in heaven, but He is also here as we are told in Colossians 1:27: "Christ IN YOU, the hope of glory." "Jesus Christ is in you" (2 Corinthians 13:5).

When Jesus was teaching in the synagogue the scribes and Pharisees said, "Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies" after Jesus had said to the palsied man, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee" (Mark 2:1-12). The scribes and Pharisees reasoned among themselves: This man blasphemeth. Who can forgive sins but God alone. Jesus knowing their thoughts said, "Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power ON EARTH to forgive sins (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house" (w. 9-11).

The high priest had a special function before God. "For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins" (Hebrews 5:1). Jesus is our high priest, and we know that He was ordained by God in things pertaining to men to offer sacrifices for sin (Himself on the cross). One day a year in Israel on the Day of Atonement the high priest went into the HOLY OF HOLIES and

sprinkled the lamb's blood on the mercy seat and pushed Israel's sins forward for another year (Leviticus 16).

Almost every day of the year hundreds of other priests would offer sacrifices in the OUTER COURT, and minister in THE HOLY PLACE.

The high priest sprinkled the blood in the holy of holies for the entire nation once each year, whereas the other priests offered sacrifices for individuals throughout the year.

First Peter 2:9 teaches that the believer is part of a royal priesthood. The Old Testament priests offered seven different kinds of sacrifices. One of these sacrifices was "the burnt offering" and is fulfilled in the New Testament as "THE SACRIFICE OF PRAISE" spoken of in Hebrews 13:15: "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name." They burned the fat of the calves or bullocks, and this constituted the burnt offering. "THE FRUIT OF OUR LIPS" is literally "the calves and bullocks of our lips." God smelled the Old Testament burnt offerings and today our praises ascend to Him as the smell of a sweet savour, God hears prayer and "smells" praise.

Jesus, our high priest, offered Himself as the single sin sacrifice for the world. "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye

sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation" [the atoning sacrifice] "for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:1-2). Just as the high priest offered the blood in the Holy of Holies for the nation, Jesus presented His blood to the Father for the sins of the world on the cross, and a short time later took it to the Holy of Holies in heaven. He is the Lamb which takes away the sin of the world.

As (believer-priests) intercessors we can stand in the gap and say, "Father, Jesus took their [our lost loved ones'] place, and I believe as He offered His blood to You for the sin of the whole world I now claim the blood of Jesus for my loved ones." Jesus rent the veil of the Holy of Holies in two, which means every one can now go into the Holy of Holies - the very presence of God - himself by the merit of Christ's blood (Hebrews 10:19). We are to offer up the blood to the Father to satisfy His legal demands for righteousness.

Our intercessory prayers are often not answered because all we have done is recite to God the lost person's sinful spiritual condition. God is well aware of that! What we should be doing is claiming the provisions of the atonement in faith, for He has sent the Living Word to free all from condemnation. For these and other reasons, our priestly function should be that of the sacrifice of praise. And our praise offering is accompanied with the faith spoken

of in Romans 4:17; we can call those things "which be not as though they were."

We are to pattern ourselves after the great High Priest!

Jesus, the great High Priest, inaugurated through the shedding of His blood the new covenant when He sprinkled it on the Holy of Holies on the mercy seat in heaven itself. He obtained an eternal redemption for us, and now as priests, we are to offer up His blood in faith for the sins of others. As priests, we have the legal right to go to God not only to offer the sacrifice of praise (the burnt offering), but offer up the sin offering as well: "Father, my loved one is in sin, but I offer up the shed blood of Jesus in his behalf." Why do this? Because Jesus is the propitiation for their sin. They may now refuse to accept it, but not for long when once they are in their right mind! The Gospel is hidden to them now because the god of this world has blinded their eyes. When once they are freed from Satan's influence and in their right mind they will say, "Yes, I will take the remission of my sins so I won't have to perish. Thank You, I appreciate that gift!"

As PRIESTS we have the authority to offer for their sins before God the blood of Jesus, and as KINGS we have the authority to bind the one who blinds their minds. Matthew 16:18, 19 teaches that whatsoever you bind on earth has already been bound in heaven,

and whatsoever you loose on earth has already been loosed in heaven (See N.A.S.B.). We can bind the mind-blinder, Satan, who has influenced our lost loved ones. It is the spirit of disobedience that now works in the children of wrath. The prince of the power of the air works in them (Ephesians 2:2). When we bind Satan on earth this transaction is already recognized in heaven - then we can loose them to the light of Christ. People who walk in darkness shall see a great light (Isaiah 9:2). No one in his right mind is going to resist that light. It is a natural instinct to turn toward light.

The reason some people are not saved is because we are not interceding correctly for them. We often hear this: "Beloved, let's pray for them. We need to pray more for them," followed by, "Oh Lord, bring them to repentance; smite them with conviction." What we should do as intercessors is take their place before God in praise and faith.

Jesus is my advocate. He takes my place before the Father. When I sin I have an advocate with the Father, and I confess, "Lord, I'm sorry for this sin," and Jesus takes my place before the Father. God can't place wrath upon Him again because He already laid His wrath upon Him at the cross. Now He is in the place of His Father's full favor, and His righteousness is imputed to my account.

Intercessors, in thinking of themselves in this way, are not detracting from the glorious position of Jesus as king and priest, for Jesus is not JUST a king and a priest. He is KING of kings. He is the only HIGH PRIEST. I am a king and a priest. It is through Him I reign and through Him I sacrifice to God.

A PRIEST offers sacrifices. A KING reigns.

You can minister as a priest to God and say, "Father, Jesus rent the veil and shed His blood for my lost loved ones even as He did for me. I take this individual and offer up to You the blood of Jesus for his sin. They are guilty but I hold up the righteousness of Christ in their behalf. I plead the merits of Jesus' blood for my loved ones."

A greatly misunderstood verse in John 20 sheds a light on our duties as priests unto God.

Whose Soever Sins Ye Remit

There is a principle given in John 20:23 that substantiates what we have been teaching. In the past I've confessed that I believed the whole Word of God, but found this not to be the case, especially when I read this verse. Former teachings from other groups tarnished this Scripture for me. Much of God's Word has been misused and misappropriated. We tend to throw out the baby because the bath water gets dirty.

In John 20 we read of the first appearance of Jesus to His disciples after the resurrection. He had already appeared to the women earlier in the day, but to the disciples He appeared in the evening of the first day.

To Mary He in essence said, "As the great high priest, I'll have to take the blood into the Holy of Holies and sprinkle it on the mercy seat in heaven, so don't touch me yet, Mary" /based on John 20:17). Once begun on his ceremony into the Holy of Holies, the high priest could not be touched (Leviticus 16).

The same day at evening, He said to the disciples: "Peace be to you." They were glad when they saw Him. In 1 John 1:1 we are given this concept of the disciples'
affirmation about Jesus: "that which we have seen with our eyes ... and our hands have handled, of the Word of life." He invited their

touch then, and evidently this is when they touched Him. After He had said, "Peace be to you," Jesus "breathed on them" [many authorities say "in them," or "into them"] "and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost" (John 20:22).

In 1 Corinthians 15:43-45 Paul gives a comparison between the first Adam and the last Adam. The first Adam became a living soul when he got his natural body, and the last Adam (Jesus) became a quickening spirit, or life-imparting spirit when He got His resurrected body. In other words, the changed body He received when He was raised from the dead.

Jesus forgave sins judicially before He went to the cross, but He did not impart the new life into man's spirit to give the new birth until after the new covenant had gone into effect. That is what He did first to His disciples: He breathed into them the Holy Spirit.

This paralleled what God did when He first made man. He formed man out of the dust of the earth, breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living soul. When He started the new order of man He breathed into His disciples eternal life, and they became living spirits. This is when the "new creation" took place (2 Corinthians 5:17). Of course, fifty days later they were baptized in the Holy Ghost, but they were first born of the spirit and did receive the Holy Spirit in the sense that they were born of God.

Following this, Jesus said to the disciples: "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained" (John 20:23). This verse is not speaking of personal offenses against you, as you have no right to retain any of them. Traditionalists say that this statement was simply declarative, but that it was not determinative. They contend that because a person accepts Christ, we are to say, "Your sins are remitted." And, because a person rejects Christ we would say, "Your sins are retained."

However, we see examples in the Bible where sins were retained and where sins were remitted in an actual determinative way.

Where Sins Were Retained:

In Acts, Chapter 5:

> When Ananias and Sapphira came before Peter, Ananias came first and Sapphira came three hours later, and in both cases Peter retained their sin. Peter said, "You have lied to the Holy Ghost," and then they died. A divine discipline and a divine judgment came upon them, and great fear came upon the people. People should be afraid to he to the Holy Ghost because of the holy fear of God.

In Acts 13:10, 11:

Paul retained the sin of Elymas the sorcerer and blindness came upon him.

In 1 Corinthians 5:5:

The Apostle Paul said to turn an unrepentant fornicator over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh. He was retaining that sin. According to 2 Corinthians 2 that erring brother repented and Paul said to comfort and accept him and reaffirm love to him. When the torments of Satan came he repented, got back under the covenant protection, and his sins were remitted.

In 1 Timothy 1:20:

Paul said of Hymenaeus and Alexander: "Whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme." By retaining their sins, he was allowing Satan to come against them.

Where Sins Were Forgiven:

In Acts 7 we see where sin was forgiven and it was remitted unto them when Stephen, who was being stoned, said as he sank to the earth, "Lord, I pray that this sin not be laid to their charge." In the past I viewed this as nothing more than a noble gesture, knowing, of course, that Jesus taught we are not to have unforgiveness. Lately I've seen Stephen's request as granted by heaven. I cannot say unequivocally, but it does seem the sin of murder was not laid on the stone-throwers' record. Stephen's request was made after he looked up to heaven declaring, "I see Jesus standing." Jesus, who had sat down at the Father's right hand, now stood to welcome His servant home. He was giving Stephen honor for being faithful to the end. Then Stephen prayed, "Lord, let not this sin be laid to their charge." The Lord honored his dying request. A few days later the stone-throwers' coatholder (Saul of Tarsus) was apprehended on the way to Damascus. Stephen's act of forgiveness may have served as a catalyst to Paul's conversion.

The Church has limited the power of forgiveness. Jesus said, "Whose soever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them." In that passage there is no hint that He is referring to personal offenses committed against us. Of course, this is effective only to your measure of faith. Jesus also taught that we could throw literal

mountains and trees into the sea; however, I do not know anyone who has done that.

Still, I believe that is possible. James tells us that the prayer of faith not only heals the sick, but also results in forgiveness of any sin the sick believer may have committed (James 5:14, 15).

We can remit sin as fulfilling our priestly role. We can intercede for our lost loved ones because of the merit of Jesus' blood and the work of the Spirit. As a priest, through Jesus our high priest, we can declare their sins remitted. We have been acting as though we are trying to get God to do something. We need to realize that He has already done the "something" to take care of our family. We have to operate on that truth, and we will see them delivered, set free, and made alive in Christ Jesus.

A Word From Pastor Benny Hinn

The Word of God declares in Matthew 18:19, *"If two of you **shall agree** on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven."*

I come into agreement with you today for the salvation of all of your loved ones. Each one of them is extremely precious to our loving Savior. The Lord Jesus longs for each one of them to come to know Him and experience the greatest miracle of all - salvation. John 3:16 declares *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting* life." There is nothing your unsaved loved ones have done that has destroyed our Father's love for them. His love is far greater than any and all of their sins.

As you bow your head right now to pray this prayer of agreement, recognize that all of heaven is in agreement with you. The Holy Spirit is with you right now as you pray. The Lord Jesus is our High Priest, our Intercessor, who stands with us always in agreement as we come before the throne of the Father.

The Word of God also declares in 1 John 5:14,15: *"And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us. And if we know that he hear us,*

whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him." It is God's will to save your loved ones. You can have perfect confidence that He will hear your prayer for them - and answer it!

Now get ready to pray for your loved one's salvation.

A SPECIAL PRAYER OF AGREEMENT

Heavenly Father, as a member of the New Covenant priesthood, I now come to You through Jesus Christ, who is the High Priest of my confession, in behalf of (speak his/her name) whose mind has been blinded by the god of this world.

Holy Father, I come to You in ___________________'s stead requesting that You will grant mercy and favor to (him/her). (He/she) is not innocent, but because of the mighty atoning work of the cross, I ask You to wash away (his/her) sins with the power of your precious blood.

I take (his/her) place before You, standing in the gap, and making up the hedge. I refuse, in the name of Jesus, to allow the enemy to kill or destroy ________________________________. I declare that the god of this age is bound, and his influence is broken in the life of _________________________. No longer will (he/she) live under Satan's control.

Just as Lazarus was raised from death to new life, I come to You on behalf of __________________________________ and ask that You raise them from spiritual death to eternal life. I thank you, Father, that soon (he/she) will come forth into newness of life. (He/she) will come out of darkness and into light, out of sin and

into righteousness, out of rebellion and into submission, out of hardness and into brokenness. I thank you, Lord Jesus, that the true light of your love is now shining upon,_______________.
I ask You to send forth laborers to lead (him/her) to salvation.

Father, I put You in remembrance and plead my case, in Jesus' name. You have promised, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, *and thy house." My*
sons and my daughters shall prophesy. My husband/wife is sanctified through my faith in You. All my children are the Lord's disciples and great is their peace. It is well with my family. AMEN!